

# ROCHESTER HISTORY

Edited by BLAKE MCKELVEY, *City Historian*

VOL. XX

JANUARY, 1958

No. 1

## The Germans of Rochester Their Traditions and Contributions

By BLAKE MCKELVEY

Although the Germans comprised, for more than a half century, the largest minority group in Rochester, they have long since been so completely absorbed that most of their earlier traditions have become obscure. Yet the extent of their contributions was so great and the varied facets of their experience so revealing that an historical review of the part they played in the city's development will add much to our understanding of its present as well as its past.

Like the Irish who, prior to 1860, exceeded them, and indeed like the Yankees and other natives who antedated and outnumbered both, the Germans hastened to establish their own religious and social institutions in Rochester and strove in many ways to realize the aspirations that had prompted their migration. While some came as individuals and endeavored to adjust quickly to the local situation, others arrived with their families and acquaintances and hoped to preserve old traditions and relationships. As their number increased, the German community became in itself a significant aspect of the Rochester scene, inviting if not compelling many later migrants to conform to its hyphenated standards rather than to those of the older American city.

Yet, unlike the Irish, the Germans sprang from dissimilar regional backgrounds and imported many Old Country divisions. Despite a common language, which set them off more sharply from the rest of the community than other early minorities, internal rivalries obstructed the development of a clearly defined German colony. Their American-born children hastened the assimilation process. While, as with the Irish, a series of events in the homeland stirred renewed efforts to revive

---

**ROCHESTER HISTORY**, published quarterly by the Rochester Public Library, distributed free at the Library, by mail 25 cents per year. Address correspondence to the City Historian, Rochester Public Library, 115 South Avenue, Rochester 4, N.Y.

German traditions, these episodes were so widely spaced that their effect generally sufficed only to insure a larger cultural contribution, thus enriching rather than fracturing the local heritage. Present-day Rochester owes more than is generally realized to the hardy residents of its middle decades who hailed from Germany.

### The German Pioneers

Only a few of Rochester's pioneers were of German birth. Jacob Hau [or Howe] arrived within two years of the first permanent settlers and would be feted a half-century later as the oldest living resident. Barely a half dozen of his fellow-countrymen located at the falls during the first decade, and most of them, taking native wives, quickly lost their ethnic identity in the village community. Yet an influx of fresh migrants commenced in the late twenties, and by 1834, when Rochester became a city, at least 300 of its 12,000 inhabitants were of German birth. Outnumbered forty to one at that date, these newcomers multiplied so rapidly during the next twenty years that they exceeded one in seven by 1855 when their American-born children comprised another seventh.

Although few of these German pioneers faced the traditional hardships of the American frontier, they shared its experiences in other ways. Not only did they, like most other residents in those early years, often build their own houses and establish their own trades, but they had also to learn the ways and the speech of their new neighbors and to try to make themselves understood. This last task required more than linguistic skill, for some of these newcomers had strange ideas as well as customs, and their desire to perpetuate and transmit them prompted the establishment and support of numerous institutions.

The first effort was one in which most of the men could participate —the formation of a militia company in 1832. Since the native Americans already had at least three such bodies and the Irish one, the new unit represented no breach in local traditions, yet the shout of commands in German supplied a novelty. How long that first company, headed by Captain Klein, persisted is uncertain, but the organization of the German Grenadiers in 1840, under Captain Bernard Schoeffel and Lieutenant George Ellwanger, provided a more enduring successor, one which frequently took its place with other local companies in community parades and ceremonies.

That early spirit of unity did not long prevail, however, for the German Protestants from the lower Rhineland had little in common

with their Catholic fellow countrymen from the upper Rhine country. Both groups soon undertook to establish separate institutions. The German Protestants had gathered in a basement room of the Second Presbyterian Church on rare occasions as early as 1830 to hear the Reverend Mr Müller, an itinerant pastor, preach in German. They formed a United Evangelical Lutheran Society in 1832 and conducted services in various quarters until the completion of their chapel on Grove Street in 1838.

Meanwhile the German Catholics, coming for the most part from South Germany and Austria, found the atmosphere at St. Patrick's too foreign for their taste and made an effort in 1835 to organize a second church with some French Catholics from Canada. When St. Mary's, as it was called, failed to take hold, the Germans formed a new society and purchased a small chapel erected by the Methodists a few years before on Ely Street. Although they attracted support from the Leopold Foundation of Vienna, shifting policies within that body and uncertainties concerning its independent status troubled many communicants. Several families residing on the west side withdrew to form a new society known as St. Peter's. When Bishop Hughes of the New York Diocese visited Rochester in 1843 he accepted both churches into the fold. But most of the Germans at the Ely Street chapel had already formed another society which acquired a site on Franklin Street where they erected a large stone structure which was dedicated in 1846 as St. Joseph's Church.

Several divisions had likewise appeared among the Protestants. The first occurred in 1842 when a number of families hailing from Prussia withdrew from the Zion Lutheran Church on Grove Street to found Trinity Evangelical, the first United Reform Association congregation. While it was struggling to establish a permanent home, opened on Ann [Allen] Street in 1847, a band of German Methodists drew together and acquired a site at Grove and Stillson Streets where they dedicated a small chapel in 1848. Three years later another group of German Baptists announced services in old District School No. 10 on Andrews Street, which they later acquired and remodeled into a church. Meanwhile a second German Evangelical Association organized still a fifth local body in 1847 and dedicated a church on St. Joseph and Nassau Streets a decade later.

A third major stream of Germans also established its first religious institution at Rochester in these years. The German Jews, who began to arrive in the mid-forties, met in 1848 to organize a congregation.

After conducting occasional services in various places for several years, it leased an old Baptist chapel on St. Paul Street in 1852. Four years later the group was strong enough to purchase and remodel that building as Berith Kodesh Temple.

The rapid influx of Germans, which made this diversification of religious institutions both necessary and possible, supported numerous ethnic endeavors as well. The German Grenadiers could not accommodate all who wished to join their ranks, and some of those excluded formed a new unit, known as the Union Guards, in 1848. Six young men with musical instruments organized a street band that spring to accompany the militia groups and enliven other outdoor ceremonies. A singing society, known as the Germania, appeared the next winter and gave its first public concert at Corinthian Hall in July 1850. A local lodge of the Sons of Hermann received its charter later that year, and the Humboldt lodge of the I. O. O. F. a few months after, while numerous German Catholics, shunning the secret bodies, organized four benefit societies in the early fifties.

Except for the militia units and the band, whose street parades received frequent notice, most of the early German groups attracted little attention, but one ceremony did stir wide interest. That was the Christmas celebration at the German Lutheran Zion Church in December 1840. The report of its lighted and decorated fir tree spread rapidly through the city and brought curious visitors from all parts of town into the modest chapel to see for themselves. The pleasure many took in this colorful if strange symbol assured a wide adoption of the Christmas tree in later years.

The Germans were a sociable folk, and 1851 saw the establishment of a local organization which was destined to perform a leading role in this field for many decades. The Turner Society was at first primarily an athletic club whose members met to practice gymnastic exercises. It soon undertook other functions and, as the leading non-denominational body, attracted wide support from all factions and became, in some respects, the chief representative of the German community. This position was strengthened by the enthusiastic reports received from Turner societies in other American cities where the five established in 1850 grew to sixty in four years. They quickly formed regional associations to conduct inter-city meets and festivals. Minerva Hall, leased by the Rochester Turners, could not hold all who sought to attend their exhibitions in 1853, but larger quarters were hard to find and the society had to build its own hall in 1859.

Most of the early German settlers at Rochester were young adults but many soon produced children whose schooling became an active concern. For a decade or more those born in America quickly picked up English and merged easily into the public school. But as the flood of new immigrants mounted, especially after the 1848 revolution in their homeland, the number speaking German often exceeded those using English in certain neighborhoods, and the need for schools to teach the youth became more urgent. St. Joseph's Church had taken the initiative in organizing a parish school in 1836, the first in the city. When its pupils reached 200 and overflowed the basement rooms in the new edifice, the congregation determined to erect a school building on an adjoining lot and dedicated it in 1851. Two other parochial schools offering some instruction in German as well as in English appeared during that decade, and the opening of a Hebrew, German and English Institute in 1856 provided opportunities for adults.

The influence of these newcomers increased rather dramatically during the fifties. A political group known as the German Democratic Association had attracted occasional press notice since 1840. It developed considerable strength in the sixth and ninth wards where most of its members resided. Hermann Pfaefflin, the German historian who came to Rochester thirty years later, tells of the arrival in 1835 of an agent of the New York *Staats-Zeitung* who collected one hundred subscriptions to that Democratic weekly which continued to find a ready market in the city for many years. As the number of German readers increased, the desire for a local journal mounted, and Dr. Lewis G. Miller established the short-lived *Rochester Germania* early in 1849. Although that weekly soon expired, G. H. Haass and H. A. Blauw founded the daily *Beobachter* in 1851 and the weekly *Beobachter am Genesee* a year later. Their Democratic sentiments helped to support the efforts of the German Democratic Association which successfully engineered the election of four of its members to the Common Council, all from the ninth ward, during the fifties.

The German influence faltered only in 1854 when one faction of the old Whigs organized the Know-Nothing or American Party and captured control of the city that fall. However, the rise of the Republican Party the next year, with its less exclusive and more idealistic stand, welcomed German support. Adolph Nolte bought control of the daily and weekly *Beobachter* and gave them a Republican slant. A new paper, *Der Anzeiger des Nordens*, which had made its modest bow as a weekly two years before, now undertook to rally Democratic sup-

port. The contending parties, both eager to attract voters, each nominated and elected a German alderman, the Republicans in the eighth ward and the Democrats in the eleventh, in 1858. Thus the brief flurry of nativism had an opposite effect and spurred Germans as well as the Irish and others to secure and assert their privileges as naturalized voters. Indeed Bernard Schoeffel, first captain of the Grenadiers and elected to the Common Council in 1852, served as a special naturalization agent for the Germans during the mid-fifties.

But the German influence was destined to be more far-reaching in other fields. The organization of a Harmonic Society in 1855 brought a series of public concerts in German for several seasons, while the annual balls of the Grenadiers, the sports festivals of the Turners and the picnics of the benefit societies, among other bodies, contributed to the excitement of their several neighborhoods during the late fifties. A small group interested in the drama presented an occasional German play, and two new fraternal lodges as well as a second musical society, the Maennerchor, made their appearance; a Schiller Society staged its first festival at Corinthian Hall in November 1859.

The outbreak of the Civil War checked the influx of immigrants but kindled new loyalties among the earlier arrivals. Several of the officers and many of the young men in the German militia units hastened to enlist in response to Lincoln's call for troops. Thus Rochester's first local unit, the 13th N. Y. State Regiment, had one German-speaking company under the command of Captain Adolph Nolte, the editor of the *Beobachter* who had received his training in the French army of the Algiers. When Nolte resigned, following a severe wound, Captain Henry Gech, and then Captain Henry Lomb, succeeded to command. More than a tenth of the 200 volunteers in this unit lost their lives during its bloody engagements, and the proportion was still higher among their 350 fellow countrymen who joined the 108th and the 140th N. Y. State Regiments within the next year. Numerous other Germans from Rochester also served individually or in small groups in various units. Louis Ernest, former commander of the Union Guards, rose in successive posts to the rank of Colonel in the 140th Regiment, succeeding Patrick O'Rorke, Rochester's Irish hero at the Battle of Gettysburg.

Despite their concern over the frightful course of the Civil War, the Germans of Rochester, like other citizens, managed to carry on a lively array of home-front activities. The Maennerchor gave a concert at Corinthian Hall, and the Schiller Society celebrated its third anniversary

there, too, both in 1862. The report of numerous casualties galvanized local Germans to action in behalf of their orphans, and St. Joseph's Church took the initiative in projecting the establishment of an asylum for them. Over 6000 attended a benefit picnic staged to raise funds for that institution which was finally opened on Andrews Street in 1866. Three additional benefit societies appeared in these years, and the Turners opened a German-English school in their new building in 1860 and equipped a gymnasium in one of the rooms of the building they rented in 1863 after the destruction of their first hall by fire. At least eight additional Germans served on the Common Council, averaging two a year during the war, some from the new wards into which these citizens were now scattering.

### German Contributions to the Economy

With the return of peace in 1865, the Germans, like other residents of Rochester, enjoyed new opportunities for economic expansion. Several of the city's industries responded quickly to the post-war boom, and the Germans contributed materially to that revival. The courage many of them had displayed in battle had won respect from their fellow Rochesterians, and the nativism that had arisen during the mid-fifties was now in large part dispelled. This change would become increasingly evident in the mid-seventies when a nation-wide depression created an urgent need for united community effort. Meanwhile a number of German merchants and craftsmen explored new commercial and industrial fields and developed fresh potentialities in several older lines.

Indeed the early German residents at Rochester had already introduced many of their later specialties. The nurseries, the breweries, the shoe and clothing industries and the optical factories, all trace their local origins back to pre-Civil War beginnings. With over two thirds of all employed Germans at Rochester engaged in manufacturing in 1870, their representation in the other occupations was small. Yet those in trade outnumbered the common laborers and exceeded two thirds of all listed under personal service—mostly women in this case. However it was their enterprise in the industrial field that provided the jobs to attract an increased flow of immigrants, nearly doubling the total of the city's German-born in the decade following the war and trebling it by 1890.

Of course in most industrial activities the Germans did not supply the sole or even a distinctly separate enterprise. They generally found native or Irish partners eager to join in new ventures and to share their

respective skills. Thus in the nursery business, young George Ellwanger had made an enduring alliance with Patrick Barry in 1840, founding a horticultural enterprise which quickly demonstrated the advantages Rochester's climate and its location on a convenient east-west trade route presented in that field. Although this industry was not a large employer, except for brief periods in the spring season when rush orders had to be filled, the German-born soon outnumbered the British, who also took an early interest in the field, and comprised a fifth of all listed in the occupation as late as 1900 when the native-born had largely taken over.

George Ellwanger had secured his citizenship in the same week that his association with Patrick Barry was announced. While his Irish partner devoted much time to local horticultural societies and journals, Ellwanger made frequent trips abroad in search of new and improved stock and frequently brought back talented young Germans, some of whom later set out as agents of Ellwanger & Barry and eventually established independent nurseries of their own in communities further west. For several decades many of them returned annually to Rochester to replenish their stock and enjoy a reunion with Ellwanger who with his sons had assumed an active part in the cultural life of the community.

Ellwanger and his partner also took the lead in the early sixties in promoting the city's first horse-car company. They naturally plotted its first line to serve their Mount Hope nursery. When their expanding operations prompted the acquisition of new acres further out, they subdivided some of their early tracts into residential plots for their workers and other residents of the rapidly growing city. The trees left standing gave this district a special charm and spurred home owners elsewhere in Rochester to embellish their yards and streets with ornamental trees. In the mid-eighties George Ellwanger joined other Rochesterians in the campaign for a city park system, and the gift of thirty hilltop acres from their nursery grounds provided the nucleus for Highland Park, the first in the city, in 1888. The trees already there and the shrubs they later donated made it virtually a botanic garden.

Because of their handicraft skills, German immigrants readily found employment in most of the city's leading industries. They supplied over 300 of its shoe workers in 1870 and four times that number by the close of the century when they comprised a third of the total. If the Germans did not often hold managerial posts in this field, where the Yankees and the British predominated, even here one of their number, Henry J. Utz, who landed in America as an immigrant lad in 1869,

became the founder a dozen years later of the Rochester Slipper Company. The success of that venture prompted a merger with another shoe firm, headed by W. H. Dunn, and the new company, Utz & Dunn, erected the largest shoe factory at Rochester in 1910.

The Germans flocked in still larger numbers into the building trades. Many as carpenters and masons helped to build the new houses springing up in Rochester's outer wards. They also found jobs in local furniture factories. Although the Irish dominated the carriage industry, German cabinet makers took the lead in establishing companies to manufacture caskets in one case and dental chairs in another. These two ventures, the Stein Manufacturing Company and the Ritter Dental Company, soon developed markets that extended far beyond the city limits.

But while the Germans thus contributed enterprise and skill to a wide assortment of firms, they also seized the opportunity to create what became, during the latter part of the century, Rochester's major industry. Indeed the men's clothing trade was for a time almost the sole occupation of the German Jews. The earliest residents of this group had shared as merchant tailors in its birth during the forties. Their enterprise in promoting the sale of ready-made suits and overcoats at store counters along the northern edge of Main Street bridge, where westward migrants paused for a fitting, assured their work shops, located in out-of-the-way lofts along Front and Mill Streets, a steady rush of orders and prompted the introduction of sewing machines and other laborsaving devices. The Civil War brought additional demands for their products, but it was the post-war period that saw the most rapid expansion of this industry which soon employed more workers than any local rival.

An important aspect of clothing manufacture was its decentralization which made it especially attractive to many immigrant families. Often only the cutting was done in the principal shop, and the pieces were distributed in bundles to be sewed and pressed in scattered homes where all members of the family could lend a hand. The arrangement enabled many newcomers to earn a living, if only a meager one, even before they had begun to master the language and learn the ways of their new land. Unfortunately this situation, with eager workers bidding for jobs, enabled greedy managers to cut the piece rates with each new influx, and the exploitation of child labor that resulted eventually brought protests from the school authorities and the public generally.

A host of new firms appeared as enterprising newcomers established small shops in neighborhood lofts and contracted with the leading merchants for bulk orders. The contractors sub-let some of the jobs, but they also performed numerous operations in their crowded shops where a few sewing machines and other mechanical aids speeded the work. Some of the leading merchants discovered that they could achieve better standards of workmanship by a closer supervision of each operation, and several of them transformed their warehouses and cutting rooms into factories for the manufacture of their quality lines. By the late eighties such firms as Michaels, Stern & Company; L. Adler Brothers; Wile, Brickner & Wile; Stein, Bloch & Company had emerged as producers of fine clothing. They adopted brand names and other devices to distinguish their products on the market and sent salesmen out to gather orders in distant cities. Some of them and many lesser merchants continued to deal with the contract shops and even with home workers in filling their cheaper lines. But when the depression of the mid-nineties shattered that market without inflicting great loss on the luxury trade, the pressure for a concentration of the industry into larger and fewer factories was intensified.

The Rochester clothing industry had almost completed this transformation by the late nineties when a new wave of immigrant Jews, this time from Poland and Russia, brought a sudden multiplication of the contract shops and a revival of home work. The Germans listed as employed in the clothing industry outnumbered the Poles and Russians four to one in 1900, but these figures failed to count the many hundreds who worked at home, now principally Eastern Jews. Again a fiercely competitive situation developed, forcing wage rates down and creating a bitter economic division that accentuated the religious differences separating the German and Eastern Jews. The former, along with their fellow Germans of Catholic and Protestant faiths, had long since made numerous adjustments to their American environment, even taking an able Irishman, Jeremiah G. Hickey, into one of the leading firms. If, conscious also of the contributions they had made, they faced the new predicament by closing ranks, much as the earlier Yankees had done in the mid-fifties, their action generally brought labor-management rather than political conflict.

As the growth of the clothing industry attracted skilled artisans, developed technical machinery and created new demands for accessory products, enterprising Germans and their offspring helped to establish specialized firms that reaped a locational advantage. Thus Max Low-

enthal, who was brought to America at the age of ten in 1853, moved to Rochester as a young man and in 1873 purchased a knitting machine invented by a divinity student and organized a company to make leggings, mittens, scarves and sweaters which commanded a wide market. Herman C. Cohn, the American-born son of a migrant of the forties, also moved to Rochester as a young man and established a necktie factory that captured the local trade and sent eager sales agents to distant cities. Meanwhile the city's output of suits and overcoats created a huge demand for buttons. Most of them had to be imported prior to 1887 when Moses B. Shantz, recently arrived from Germany, began to manufacture them by a secret process from a substance known as vegetable ivory. Within a quarter century, two Rochester factories would produce more than half the nation's supply of buttons.

Other German newcomers likewise built local industries on their native skills. One of the most interesting examples was that supplied by the basket weavers who settled on Jay Street in the seventies. Basket Town, as it came to be known, never attained great proportions, but for two decades this German-speaking district displayed its useful and sometimes quaint products in neighborhood shops.

Of course the occupation most popularly associated with the Germans was that of the brewers. At least a dozen of them commenced operations at Rochester during the fifties, and while several failed others took their places. Two of the earliest, Henry Bartholomay and Henry Oothout prospered and, with Frederick J. Miller and other newcomers, developed one of the city's major industries, at least in the amount of capital invested, during the seventies and eighties. Thirteen firms produced a product valued at \$1,411,000 in 1880, and although a British trust purchased and consolidated the three largest, the ten surviving firms doubled that output within a decade. Most of the managers and workmen were German-born even after the passage of control to the British company. Moreover the Bock and Bavarian beers introduced in the seventies held preference over the lighter ales the English tried to promote and helped to strengthen the competitive position of the independent companies.

The German brewers, who seldom employed more than 400 regular workers, promoted several accessory industries of a broader and more permanent influence. Their demand for ice with which to cool the brew forced a rapid development of local ice-cutting activities during the seventies and of artificial-ice plants two decades later. The introduction of a new process of speeding and controlling fermentation,

purchased by Henry Bartholomay from a German brewer in 1877, spurred competing applications for patents and precipitated a bitter court battle between Bartholomay and John M. Pfaudler, a local rival. The controversy prompted further experimentation and resulted in improvements that justified the formation of the Pfaudler Vacuum Fermentation Company which later developed the glass-lined tank and became the Pfaudler Company though it was not predominantly German. Meanwhile the brewers encountered a persistent criticism from their more abstemious fellow citizens, and when the triumph of the prohibitionists closed their establishments during the World War, two of the largest switched quickly to the milk trade and speeded the development of high standards in pasteurization and bottling.

However, the most enduring contribution of Rochester's German residents in the economic field was made by still another and more specialized firm—Bausch & Lomb. When John Jacob Bausch and Henry Lomb, who had separately migrated from Germany a few years before, opened their shop on an upper floor of the Reynolds Arcade in 1853, it was conceived as a Daguerreotype parlor but offered as a sideline to sell spectacles to its customers. Bausch at first imported small supplies of the latter from his older brother in Germany. He soon began to grind a few lenses and to cut and polish horn frames himself. The chance discovery of a piece of hard rubber prompted inquiries and led to a contract in 1866 with the India Rubber Comb Company for the exclusive right to make optical instruments from its vulcanite product. With new and cheaper spectacle frames, their sales mounted, and after several successive moves the firm opened a new factory on North St. Paul Street in 1874.

Bausch and Lomb had gradually increased their staff assistants and employed one hundred skilled workers at the opening of the new plant. They had developed power grinders and die cutters to speed production. They now engaged Ernest Gundlach, a talented artisan recently arrived from Germany, to help construct their first microscopes. With great enterprise they completed a few in time for display at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, and their first price list, a four-page leaflet issued that year, described five microscope models and a limited selection of eyepieces and objectives, as well as opera glasses and spectacles.

The expanding firm attracted a continuing influx of skilled artisans from Germany. Several like Ernest Gundlach, Philip H. Yawman, Andrew Wollensak and Edward Kirstein later withdrew to found inde-

pendent and in some cases competing ventures which helped to make Rochester the national center of this industry. By the eighties the number of its American-trained workers was increasing. Edward Bausch, eldest son of the founder, was out of college and ready to take charge of the manufacture of the first photographic lenses and shutters. His brothers and the sons of Henry Lomb all found an active place in the firm. The 1889 catalogue required 112 pages to list the various products, many of them patented. Bausch & Lomb was already at that date equipped with the largest optical factory in the world. Yet its expansion continued, and in 1903 a total of 1200 workers helped to celebrate the firm's fiftieth anniversary. The proportion of its workers who were German-born was now rapidly declining, as the influx of newcomers was tapering off, yet the continued demand for technical skills there and at such other factories as the German-founded Stecher Lithographic Company and the Northeast Electric Company, not forgetting the Eastman Kodak Company, would make Rochester the destination for highly trained and talented immigrants for years to come.

While some Germans displayed technical abilities in the fields of mechanics and practical science, others won confidence in the financial realm. A few received invitations to serve as trustees of one or another Rochester bank during the depression of the mid-seventies, notably George Ellwanger, Louis Ernst and J. J. Bausch. And in 1884 a group of Germans, led by Frederick Cook, established the German-American Bank to take the place of the City Bank of Rochester whose unfaithful cashier had caused its failure. Cook, who had succeeded Ernst as president of the German Insurance Company, established in 1873, had come to Rochester as a youth in the fifties and had secured successive jobs on area railroads. Finally as conductor he had assisted many of his migrating countrymen to find their proper destination and had won the gratitude of many who settled in the city. When he retired from the railroad in the early seventies, his many Rochester friends pushed him forward into a new field of activity.

As the years passed several of these newcomers won positions of influence in broad community enterprises. Cook for example became president of the Rochester Telephone Company and later succeeded Patrick Barry as president of the transit company. Other German business leaders were too absorbed with the details of their own firms to accept leading roles in the utility field, yet several of them served as trustees of finance or public service companies, and many joined with other citizens in establishing the Chamber of Commerce in 1888. Max

Brickner, its first foreign-born president (1892), was a German Jew, and George Dietrich, a more recent immigrant from that land, succeeded to the same post in 1910. Yet the number of the German-born was beginning to decline rapidly by that date, and the burden of leadership was passing to their sons and grandsons in the economic as well as in other fields.

### Civic and Cultural Contributions

The participation of the Germans in community affairs had increased rapidly after the Civil War. Both parties hastened to select candidates from this group for the city council, and some received higher nominations. Several played varied roles in determining important civic issues; others took prominent parts in social and cultural developments. The continued influx of newcomers, coupled with significant developments in the homeland, spurred a revival of German-American group activities and assured a more forthright effort to preserve and transmit their native cultural traditions. However, the many and sometimes conflicting currents of German heritage lessened the impact and encouraged a give-and-take exchange between these and other newcomers and the older Rochesterians. The city's cosmopolitan years were as a result lively and often exciting, but they remained on the whole peaceful.

The German political representation mounted even during the war. Instead of one or two they elected three aldermen, sometimes four or more every year after 1862 except in 1870, and the five elected the next year quickly redressed the balance. As these were two-year terms, their representation was substantial, especially in 1876 when they numbered twelve. Their numbers dropped off after that date, but averaged six men in each council until that of 1900. A majority of these men were Democrats, and a fair number were associated with the brewery industry and helped to frustrate the efforts of the temperance forces during these years. Even the Sunday-closing laws were indifferently enforced except in periods of intense agitation by the Blue Ribbon Club and other groups. To offset such activities, the brewers opened a free beer counter in the Arcade on one occasion and erected elegant pavilions at the summer resorts on the lake, where the Sabbath-closing bans did not apply.

Of course the German councilmen were not all in agreement on this issue or on other matters, and they seldom if ever voted as a block. Yet the parties could not disregard the strength a few German names

gave to their tickets. In addition to seventy elected to the common council prior to 1900, eleven served on the Executive Board and many of these and several others sat for a term or two on the Board of Supervisors or the School Board. John Lutes, thrice elected alderman, won the mayoralty, which the Democrats did not often do, in 1870. Frederick Cook failed in that contest four years later but successfully won election as Secretary of State in 1885 and 1887, leading the state ticket on the latter occasion. A few other Rochester Germans served at Albany, too, in varied capacities and many more in administrative branches of the city government. Perhaps the one who made the largest contribution in the latter field was Emil Kuehling, the engineer who helped to build both the Holly and Hemlock water systems, the east and west-side trunk sewers, and served Rochester in an expert capacity for a quarter of a century.

Most of the German-born who took an active part in the city's political life had died or retired before the Good Government movement developed in the mid-nineties. Younger men, some, like Isaac Adler, sons of German immigrants, took the lead in this and other movements around the turn of the century. The Civil War generation had passed its prime, and the more recent immigrants were chiefly concerned with other matters.

Indeed the Germans of Rochester fell into three fairly distinct historical generations. Those of the pre-Civil War period have already been described. Those who arrived shortly before or in the course of that struggle and who experienced its hardships and responded to its challenge, strove to identify themselves with the wider community and to measure their achievements in its light. Nevertheless many, even of that generation, felt an unexpected pride in their native heritage when news of the triumphs of the Prussian armies and the unification of Germany filled local headlines in 1869 and 1870. The resurgence of old loyalties helped to account for the triumph of numerous German candidates for local office during the next two decades, but it also brought a revival of earlier German-American cultural institutions. Although these clubs and societies sought to attract the sons and daughters of earlier arrivals, they enjoyed their major success with the more recent newcomers whose sense of loneliness in a strange land was thus assuaged. They also sustained the German newspapers and enlivened the societies by injecting some of the ardor for outdoor recreation which was already sweeping the Fatherland.

There was of course no clear line of demarcation between these generations, yet the shift of interest and of emphasis was strikingly evident after 1870. The Franco-Prussian war quickened the pride of local Germans in their homeland and strengthened their self confidence. A dozen local societies participated in a Jubilee parade on September 5, 1870, to celebrate the victories of the Prussian armies. Forming at the junction of East Avenue and Main Street, they marched in successive units to the accompaniment of three bands down Main to St. Paul Street and north to Bartholomay's Park where they merged into a great throng that milled about under waving banners singing old German songs and listening to marshal music until a late hour.

The Turners, who took an active part in that celebration, had already experienced a renewal of spirit during the preceding year. A series of fires had gutted their successive halls during the sixties, but finally in October 1869 they dedicated a new three-story building erected at a cost of \$12,000 on North Clinton Street. It had not only a spacious gymnasium or assembly hall, but also a number of smaller exercise rooms, plus of course a large refreshment bar and other features. An adjoining structure served the German-American Realschule now independently operated. The one hundred members who had sustained its efforts during the late sixties soon enrolled many more, and Rochester became the focal point for annual Turnverein festivals, attracting visiting groups from as far as Syracuse and Utica to the east, Buffalo and Dunkirk to the west.

Numerous other German societies took advantage of the Turn Hall. The Maennerchor, the Liedertafel, the Arion society, each met there for practice, as did at least one of the street bands, and it was there that several visiting theatrical troupes presented occasional German plays. One company even performed Hamlet in German at this hall in 1870. When fire struck again in June 1872, the Turners rallied quickly and dedicated a remodeled building six months later. They took the opportunity this time to design the hall more specifically as a large meeting room to facilitate musicals and theatricals.

The German-American school, started by the Turners in 1860, had also suffered because of frequent relocations. An independent society, organized in 1867 to manage its affairs, had retained a close association with the Turners, erecting its building at the rear of the Turn Hall. In addition to instruction in both German and English reading, writing and composition, it offered classes in history, science, drawing and gymnastics. Herman Pfæfflin became director of the school in 1870,

and two years later, when the losses resulting from the fire disheartened the society, Pfaefflin refused to admit defeat and boldly carried on. Others came to his aid and formed a new society which not only erected a new brick building but also backed the director's plan for a kindergarten class. That program, introduced experimentally a year or two before, precipitated an early debate over educational objectives, though no other school in the city, except perhaps the industrial school for poor children, ventured to include instruction in sewing, singing, drawing and similar subjects for another decade.

The Germans exerted other educational influences in these years. The organization of a German Lutheran School and a Holland Reformed Parochial school shortly after the war, not to mention two additional German Catholic schools, emphasized the need these folk felt for instruction in German, and after a lengthy debate the public schools moved to include it in their programs in 1871. The three German teachers engaged at this time held an irregular tenure until 1877 when the program was discontinued. The argument that most Germans now spoke English and should be encouraged to make a complete adjustment to life in America prevailed for a time. Even the Turner society debated the propriety of opening its ranks to all applicants without regard to national origins and to transform itself into a purely cultural body. Its failure to adopt that policy may have accounted for its slow decline in the late seventies and its inability to maintain the hall, which passed as a result into the hands of Mrs. Charles Rau, the mortgage holder, who renamed it Germania Hall and operated it as a meeting place for German societies.

The hardships of the Turners reflected other trends too. Each of the Catholic churches was fostering one or more benevolent societies, of which twelve appeared before the end of the decade, while a similar array of lodges absorbed the free time of many other Germans. The latent rivalry between the Turners and the Catholic benevolent societies appeared in 1874 when both held national conventions at Rochester during the last week of May. Delegates from over 200 scattered units of each federation thronged the city streets on this occasion and gave Rochester an unaccustomed German flavor.

Several new cultural societies appeared, such as the Schwabenverein, organized in 1875 to commemorate old-country festivals. A band of free thinkers held infrequent meetings and spurred renewed efforts by both Protestant and Catholic leaders to forestall their invasion. At the same time a German Dramatic club presented occasional plays, while

the visits of such noted stars as Fanny Janaushek, the queen of German tragedy, who performed on at least seven occasions in the regular theaters in these years, encouraged a broader participation in Rochester affairs. The German-born aldermen likewise endeavored to prove their qualifications as representatives of the wider community and, despite their large number, permitted the dropping of German instructors in 1877.

The world-wide economic depression of the mid-seventies had checked migration for a time, but the tide began to mount again in the early eighties. Several floods in the Rhineland prompted a number of benefit concerts and other efforts to raise a relief fund at Rochester early in 1883, and a committee finally dispatched \$2,377.60 for that purpose. Local Germans also participated a few months later in the Bi-Centennial of the founding of Germantown, and again a committee representative of the entire community secured a wide participation. Thus the parade they staged numbered over 5000 marchers and ended in a mass meeting on Franklin Square where a festival chorus supplied a fitting climax to the ceremony. This renewed interest not only brought a resurgence of the Turners, who built a new and spacious hall in 1883, valued at \$16,000, but also prompted the formation of an association of German societies for cooperative action.

One of the major purposes of the German-American society, organized in December 1883, was to provide supervision and assistance for the new tide of immigrants. It employed an agent to meet all west-bound trains and empowered him to take charge of any who had lost their way or their fare and to give advice and help as needed. His report for the first six months tabulated a migration of 17,849, most of them Germans, 520 of whom settled in Rochester. The society provided temporary employment for 204 of these, while its legal committee aided several others. Although the flood of migrants fluctuated in succeeding years, the agent often interviewed one or two thousand a month during the spring season, helping those bound for the West to find their proper care and rendering still greater assistance to those who sought relatives or jobs in Rochester. The society also opened a night school at which these newcomers could learn English. Its annual budget often exceeded \$800 and required, in addition to the payments of its member societies, an occasional benefit performance and an annual festival.

The functions of the German-American Society changed radically during its second decade. As the number of migrants from other

countries, notably from Poland and Russia, increased, the German agent found himself at a loss to direct them. A German Jewish agent who could speak Yiddish took his place for a time, but in the nineties both the Polish Jews and the Polish Catholics took steps to meet immigrant trains, and the German agent discontinued that service after 1895. The public schools had meanwhile opened night schools to teach English to immigrants in 1891, and the German-American Society carried on during the late nineties as a means of bringing the numerous and sometimes jealous groups together for community functions. Even in that field it often seemed somewhat deficient, and the Maennerchor-Liedertafel, which enjoyed great popularity during the nineties, made an effort to organize a more vigorous association. While that attempt failed, it prompted a revival of the German-American Society festivals and spurred the still older Turners to new activity.

No doubt the fluctuating fortunes of the many German societies resulted from the changing composition of their leaders and their membership. Some of the cultural societies tended to choose directors from among the more talented members of the new immigration, which gave a fresh German character to their programs and attracted other recent newcomers, plus a scattering of nostalgic oldsters. The German-American Society, founded to facilitate an adjustment to the American games, had a less foreign spirit. These divisions, together with the sharp alignment of Catholics, Protestants and Jews, defeated the efforts of those who sought to rally the entire German populace. Even the Realschule finally closed its doors in 1883 partly because of the declining interest in German instruction, and partly because of the increased adequacy of the parochial schools, both Catholic, Lutheran and Jewish.

The German churches were in fact experiencing a new era of dynamic growth. The six well-established at the mid-century had doubled in number before the end of the Civil War and trebled to 1880. Several of the early churches had enlarged or rebuilt their edifices by that date. Many of the mission chapels they founded in new German districts grew into independent churches during the next two decades, making a total of twenty-eight by the close of the century. The use of the German language persisted in many services. Nevertheless some had converted entirely to English, and indeed one, the Evangelical Lutheran Church on Franklin Street, had its origin in the desire of a large portion of the parent congregation, the pioneer Zion Evangelical Lutheran on Grove Street, to provide English language services in order to hold their American-born children. That step, taken in 1869, foreshadowed

an adjustment which several other bodies made in succeeding decades, though in some cases it was the old church which converted to English and the offspring, established in a new immigrant neighborhood, that retained German in order to serve the recent arrivals.

Several of the pioneer German churches not only fostered a family of offspring chapels but also developed affiliated societies and maintained schools. The Catholic churches, as we have seen, had a great host of benefit societies and each developed strong parochial schools. The original Zion Evangelical Lutheran congregation, which mothered a large progeny, also took the lead in establishing the Lutheran Free Seminary in 1883 which moved to Oregon Street three years later as the Wagner Memorial Lutheran College. The Rochester Theological Seminary established a German Baptist Department under Dr. August Rauschenbusch in 1874, and this too developed, with the influx of newcomers of that denomination, into the German Baptist Theological Seminary in later years.

Of the thirty-one German churches of 1900, the Protestants had twenty-four, the Catholics six and the Jews one synagogue. However their respective memberships were not clearly revealed by these institutional figures, for most of the Catholic churches numbered well over a thousand communicants, while only two or three of the Lutheran bodies matched that strength. Most of the younger Protestant churches were still small and faced a hard struggle to maintain themselves. The German Jews had under Rabbi Landsberg built a strong congregation. A small group had broken away to found a second synagogue in 1870 shortly after the introduction of an organ and the adoption of family pews at Berith Kodesh had marked the beginning of its adoption of American customs. That first division soon disappeared and it was not until the mid-eighties, when the Temple introduced an English-language ritual in some of its services that a new split developed. The Polish Jews had organized Beth Israel a few years before and some of the more orthodox Germans found it more congenial. Neither of the two later efforts to establish synagogues was predominantly German, for the migration from that country had in large part ceased during the late eighties.

The German-language press provided another staunch bulwark for German heritage. The daily and weekly *Beobachter* and its early rivals had expanded their coverage. In addition to the traditional business notices, institutional announcements and occasional political comments, they reported news from the homeland and assumed the defense of old-

country traditions when under attack by either the temperance or the nativist forces. The *Volksblatt*, which absorbed *Der Anzeiger der Nordens*, continued to champion the Democratic cause until Edward H. Makk acquired control in 1883 and gave it an independent course. Herman Pfaefflin, who had abandoned his long struggle to sustain the Realschule the year before to become the editor of the newly established *Abendpost*, joined forces that year with the ageing Adolphe Nolte, merging the two papers as the *Abendpost und Beobachter*. Several short-lived journals had appeared for a year or two, among them the *Sontag und Wochent-Blatt* edited by Frederick Donner as a Catholic paper. His sharp criticism of some Irish priests started a heated controversy which brought his downfall, and Joseph Schneider established the more enduring *Katholische Volkszeitung* a few months later. The great influx of Germans in the eighties provided a rich market for the two leading journals and prompted the *Union and Advertiser* to run a column in German as a daily feature for many months starting in 1888. Other English-language papers also inserted an occasional column of that sort during these years.

Despite a steady decline in the number of new migrants from Germany, their Rochester total exceeded those from any other single country until the eve of the First World War. The 17,000 of 1890 dropped a third in twenty years and fell to 10,000 in 1920 when the Italians in Rochester almost doubled that figure. Nevertheless the Germans with their American-born children, who together totaled 47,282 at that census, still outnumbered all rival minorities and maintained and even extended some of their cultural activities. Several efforts to establish additional newspapers quickly subsided, but the *Deutsch Zeitung* persisted for several years. New societies likewise appeared, such as the German Club of 1892, several rifle clubs and relief societies and a German Y. M. C. A., but again few of these could rival the continued vitality of the older organizations. The Maennerchor-Lidertafel attracted perhaps the widest favor because of the fine quality of its musicales and the pleasure everyone took in its masked balls and other festivals. The Turners again enjoyed a revival and assembled over 200 participants for their exhibits on several occasions after the turn of the century.

Some of the new groups, though short-lived, bridged the gap between the German-American and the unrestricted society. Thus the Beethoven Singing Society of the nineties, though it met generally at the Germania Hall, was less of an ethnic organization than the

Maennerchor and more like the choral groups of a later period. The Meyerling orchestra of that decade represented a similar advance toward the symphony orchestras of the early 1900's. The directors in each of these cases were American-born, while the Maennerchor had sent to the home country for Henrich Jacobson when it needed a new director in the nineties. All these groups, as well as the zither club among others, attracted good crowds at their frequent recitals and helped to prepare the Rochester public to maintain its more ambitious musical bodies of the next period.

Some of these groups often protested loudly against measures that seemed hostile to German national interests, but they seldom rallied a united support. Some petitioned the school board for the adoption of calisthenic exercises in the public grades; others protested the closing of saloons on the Sabbath; still others criticized the American policy in its stand against Germany on the Samoa question. But when a question was raised as to the loyalty of Rochester's German-born residents in the last case, over 5000 signed resolutions pledging their full allegiance to their adopted country. Many hastened to condemn the British action in the Boer War, but local German opinion was not so outspoken over the several questions posed by the growth of American imperialism in the early 1900's. Only in the case of the Chandler bill in 1893 were deep emotional feelings aroused. That bill, which threatened to check the flow of immigrants, spurred a wide protest from those who still hoped to bring additional members of their families to America.

Few questions stirred such deep feelings, for the great majority of Rochester's German-born had now become so securely settled in America that they could even regard old-country ways with a measure of humor. The masked balls, featuring many quaint old costumes, revealed that spirit, and so did a series of annual bowling contests between "Us Germans" and "We Irish" in which representatives of each group sported outlandish costumes and performed antics that in effect made a parody of their younger selves. It was not difficult in 1892 to muster delegations from thirty German societies for the Memorial Day parade, although the German-American Society could then only secure sixteen member bodies. A small group of Germans met at the Bavarian hall in November 1893 to commemorate the anniversary of the execution of the Chicago anarchists, but the great majority of their fellow countrymen would have been more than shocked to hear the stirring resolutions they adopted in condemnation of all capitalists.

Most of the German-born were more embarrassed than hostile when the breach between the United States and Germany developed at the outbreak of the World War. The older ones among them had celebrated the semi-centennial of the German revolution in 1898, and three years later that of the local Turnverein. The Turners fitted their hall out as a Rathskeller for the latter occasion and staged a nightly carnival with music and dancing, as well as calisthenic displays, for a full week that October. The united effort of all German Protestant churches in establishing a home for their aged members culminated with the dedication of the German Home at the corner of South and Highland Avenues in 1905. While, in this respect, they recognized the separate traditions of the elder members of the German community, they revealed at the same time a determination to identify the permanent contributions of the homeland with the Rochester environment by organizing a campaign to erect a monument to the German poet, Frederick Schiller. The subscription started for this purpose at the ceremonies commemorating the centennial of his death on May 9, 1905, was not fully adequate, but persistent effort finally produced an appropriate monument which the city park commission accepted three years later and placed on a modest pedestal in Anderson Park at the corner of University Avenue and East Main Street.

When the German-American Society began to lose its hold, a new effort to bring the various groups together occurred under the inspiration of the Deutsches-Amerikanischer Bund. Twenty-two societies, with a total membership of 2269, joined the association or bund in 1906 and made arrangements for the annual celebration of German Day at Schuetzen Park, the picnic grove of the Schuetzen or rifle club on the northeastern edge of the city. The 4000 who gathered at that first occasion in 1907 were sometimes doubled in later years when for a period the celebration was moved to Seneca Park. Some of the clubs disapproved of the transfer of this celebration to a public park, and it was brought back to the Schuetzen grove in 1914. The German-American Association made a new effort that year to secure a more adequate club house for all its affiliated societies, but the pleas for relief from the homeland forestalled further action.

The outbreak of war in Europe had created a new tension within the various German groups and between them and many other residents. The German Day celebration in 1914, coming as it did ten days after the outbreak of war, was a relatively quiet affair, though many spoke confidently of the triumph of German arms. When the invasion of

Belgium stirred anti-German sentiment in Rochester, the German-American Association called a mass meeting to present its views, but barely 500 attended since the great majority felt that as Americans they should refrain from such demonstrations. Many responded, nevertheless, to pleas for German war relief, and the German-American Association collected and dispatched nearly \$11,000 for this purpose during the year

While the situation would soon become ominous, few Germans in Rochester suspected its gravity or anticipated America's involvement in the war. They were confident that their native pride in the homeland involved no disloyalty to their adopted country to which they were ready on many occasions to pledge full allegiance. Indeed they were eager to demonstrate the extent to which they had contributed to the new nation that had grown up in America. It was partly with this object in mind that Herman Pfaefflin, the former director of the Realschule who had retired as editor of the *Abendpost* in the early 1900's, determined to compile a history of the Germans in Rochester. He had written a chapter on that subject for William F. Peck's *Semi-Centennial History of Rochester*, published thirty years before. Perhaps better than any other man, he knew the trials and the tribulations of successive efforts to keep the spirit of German culture alive in Rochester for he had, since 1870, participated in and often directed each of these endeavors. As a popular orator he had addressed innumerable throngs at the annual festivals of the Turners and other societies. He had chaired many sessions that strove to draw the divergent groups together for united action, and his eloquence, both in German and in English, had made him a respected colleague of such distinguished cultural leaders from the homeland as Rabbi Landsberg, and August Rauschenbusch. He took pleasure in describing the contributions of these and many other intellectuals along with those of the business and political leaders, in his *Hundertjährige Geschichte des Deutschiums von Rochester* published by the Deutsch-Amerikanischen Bund von Rochester in 1915.

As the war in Europe intensified, and the bulletins became more frightening, tension mounted in Rochester and elsewhere. The early sense of detachment, which had given almost universal approval to Wilson's policy of neutrality, disappeared after the sinking of the "Lusitania" with three Rochester men among the 1346 who lost their lives. Advocates of neutrality had held a mass meeting at Convention Hall less than a month before, attracting over 3000 citizens who shouted their approval of resolutions to ban all shipments of arms. A belligerent paper had, however, noted with scorn that most of the evening

was spent in singing German and Irish songs rather than those of American origin. Later peace rallies attracted smaller and quieter audiences, until finally only a few sorrowing pacifists, such as Walter Rauschenbusch, ventured to voice their opposition to war.

With the American declaration of war, early in 1917, the status of the German-born in Rochester became a public concern. The great majority were ageing naturalized citizens whose loyalty to America was seldom questioned, but at least 2000 Germans, who had failed to secure their citizen papers, had to register as enemy aliens. The United States Marshal soon compiled a list of 1400 males over fourteen years of age, resident in Rochester and its suburbs, whose jobs and loyalty had to be checked and supervised. Suspicious informants arose on every side to impugn the loyalty of many of these men and even of some naturalized citizens, but Marshal John D. Lynn maintained a cautious attitude of confidence. Fortunately local experience soon justified his policy, for the enlistment of many Germans in the nation's defense and the faithful cooperation of most of the rest in every patriotic effort gradually quieted public fears.

When the leaders of several German-American societies voluntarily offered to disband their organizations, Marshal Lynn requested them instead to carry on and to maintain active programs in order to fill the lives of their alien as well as their naturalized members with a rich cultural content and help to dispel any sense of loneliness or estrangement. Many citizens took a less balanced view of the situation, and the study of the German language and of German literature was widely abandoned in the schools, while the playing of German music became less frequent. If most of the German societies survived the ordeal, some of the lodges and other federations consolidated feeble chapters, for the number of resident Germans had declined because of the transfer of artisans from war jobs in the city to the equally important but less critical work on the farms.

With the return of peace most of the Germans of Rochester resumed their earlier customs and revived their societies. However, as the years advanced, an important shift in emphasis developed. The Turner festivals and the German Day celebrations at Schuetzen park attracted larger crowds than in the past, though the majority were now the American-born representatives of a second or third generation. On the other hand, the Maennerchor lost some of its earlier vitality as the number of choral groups mounted and the establishment of the Eastman School of Music channeled an increasing number of talented ar-

tists in this field into professional rather than amateur circles. The societies that thrived in the twenties and thirties were those offering social facilities.

Several new organizations of considerable importance appeared in these years. The Naturefriends Society, strong in Germany before the war, found its way to Rochester in 1929 and attracted many with outdoor interests. The German Culture Society, established three years later, offered entertainment featuring music, poetry and drama of the homeland. The Steuben Society formed a branch at Rochester in the 1930's and stressed the long American period of German influence and contributions.

It was not until the rise of Hitler with his fiercely intolerant doctrines that the Germans of Rochester suffered a new era of strife and disillusionment. A new wave of German Jewish refugees, though much smaller than that of the 1840's and 50's, stirred a wide feeling of indignation not only against the Nazi regime but also against any German activities that appeared to condone the regime. Thus an attempt to establish a branch of the German American Bund at Rochester in February 1938 met the determined resistance of the Jews of Rochester and also of many members of the American Legion. An attempt to hold a meeting at the Powers Hall was frustrated, and the rump session at a small restaurant in a secluded district achieved only a tentative organization. The Steuben Society and other established German groups refused to endorse the Bund, and several bodies whose names included that word, which means society, hastily translated their titles.

The Steuben Society took every opportunity to stress American as well as German traditions. It presented an American flag to the German Sports Club in 1940 for use in its parades and for display at its games. It joined with ten other German societies to remodel the German Club House in Gregory Street that year and helped to make it a major center of German group activities in Rochester. The Lieder-kranz Club on the west side supplied another possible meeting place for the numerous bodies still maintained by this group. The Turn Hall on North Clinton remained, however, the most spacious and conducted an active program for its 1200 members in 1938 when a press survey counted a total of eighty-four other German societies in the city.

The outbreak of the Second World War again created a sharp division within the German-born groups in Rochester. A small faction linked with the Bund endeavored to rally support for the Fatherland,

and on one occasion a crowd of Germans assembled to cheer a speaker who predicted Hitler's victory over Poland. However the events of the next few months were sobering to all Americans. And those who gathered for the German Day celebration in Rochester that August shunned any discussion of the war. Several of the older German societies disbanded or became inactive during the early forties, and while the Turners, the Liederkranz and a few others endeavored to carry on, some of them dropped the requirement of German birth or ancestry as a prerequisite for membership. The Liederkranz held a memorial service to honor those of its members who had given their lives to the American cause.

Several of the defunct societies revived after the war. German Day in 1954, sponsored by twenty-five of these bodies, attracted an estimated 5000 to Schuetzen park that August. New groups had also appeared, among them the Sauerkraut club, which organized a round-trip plane tour to the homeland in 1949. Many of the thirty passengers were returning for the first time to their native land, others for their first visit in over a decade. They were for the most part, old established residents of Rochester with full citizen rights.

But the city also has a few recent German immigrants. These are chiefly young women and children brought back by returning service men who acquired wives and families abroad. A few refugees from East Germany and a number of the relatives and friends of earlier migrants have added a fresh accent to the rapidly ageing and thinning ranks of Rochester's German-born. The total declined to 5012 by 1950, which was approximately the same as that of a century before when the city itself was barely a tenth its present size. Even the German-speaking population, which had numbered 47,282 in 1920, was declining. The first generation of their American-born children have long since given way to the second and third generation whose diffused origins helped to make them more distinctly American. Yet, forgetful as many are of their ethnic ancestry, we should not overlook the extent to which American traditions have been molded and enriched by the German and other contributions of earlier generations of Rochesterians.

#### Bibliographical Note

Herman Pfaefflin, the historian of the Germans of Rochester, wrote two good accounts of their contributions to the city's development. The first was translated by Max Lowenthal and appeared as Chapter 46 in William F. Peck's

*Semi-Centennial History of the City's of Rochester* (Syracuse, 1884), pp. 481-496. The second was published at Rochester in 1915 by the Deutsch-Amerikanischen Bund von Rochester under the title *Hundertjährige Geschichte des Deutschthums von Rochester*.

Professor Albert J. Ramaker of the University of Rochester delivered a memorable paper on "The Contributions of the German People to the Life and Progress of Rochester" before the Rochester Historical Society in 1929. Although based largely on Pfaefflin's volume, it adds considerable breadth of view and well merited publication in the Society's volume VIII: 175-191.

Frederick J. Zwierlein's *The Life and Letters of Bishop McQuaid* (Rochester, 1925), and John F. Byrne, *Centennial Souvenir of St. Joseph's Parish* (Rochester, 1936) contain much of interest on German Catholics. Orlo J. Price, "One Hundred Years of Protestantism in Rochester," Rochester Historical Society Publications XII: 277 ff., notes salient details on the German Protestant churches, and Rabbi Stewart Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Rochester* (N. Y., 1954), treats the German as well as the other Jews of Rochester.

A major portion of this study is based on the contemporary news items appearing in the Rochester press. These details, dug out in the preparation of my broader study of Rochester's history, appear in greater detail here than in *Rochester, The Water-Power City, Rochester the Flower City*, and *Rochester, The Quest for Quality*, although the German element is treated there too.

